



Strangulation Hazards in Window Covering Cords

For years, people thought that children were protected from strangulation hazards from cords on window blinds if the pull cords were placed out of a child's reach. However, recent evidence demonstrates that **a strangulation hazard also exists from the inner cords** used to raise the slats of the blinds.

Children ages 9 months to 20 months have died because an inner cord formed a loop when a child pulled on it. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) received 20 such reports between 1991 - 2000. During this same time, CPSC received 140 reports regarding strangulations resulting from the outer pull cords. Reports show, too, that children up to 5 years of age are at risk of strangulation from these cords.

Due to CPSC's investigation, window cords manufactured since November 2000 have attachments on the pull cords to prevent the inner cords from forming a loop if pulled by a young child.

While safety precautions and "fix-it" kits have reduced the risk of strangulation, they have not eliminated the hazard entirely. In order to reduce the risk of strangulation, follow these safety precautions:

- ▶ Locate furniture and toys away from windows and window cords.
- ▶ Lock all horizontal blinds or shades when lowered (even when resting on a windowsill).
- ▶ Keep all window cords (both the pull cords and the inner cords) inaccessible to children.
- ▶ Keep all tasseled pull cords less than 7 1/4".
- ▶ Securely anchor continuous-loop cords to the floor or wall.
- ▶ Install cord stops to limit movement of inner lift cords.
- ▶ Replace or retrofit corded window coverings manufactured prior to 2001.
- ▶ **Consider using cordless window coverings in children's play areas and bedrooms to eliminate all strangulation hazards.**

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ASK THE BUREAU

If you would like to ask a question of the Bureau of Child Care to be considered for inclusion in the newsletter, please email Mary Ann Simmons at MaryAnn.Simmons@dhss.mo.gov.

Is a certified child care facility director the same as an approved child care facility director?

No. Director certification is only the first step in the director approval process.

The director **certification** determination is a **general review** completed in the Bureau of Child Care's Central Office (CO). This certifies that an individual meets licensing rules for facilities with a specific capacity. If you have questions regarding this process, call 573-751-2450.

The director **approval** determination is a **specific review** completed by the Child Care Facility Specialist (CCFS), which verifies that an individual meets all licensing rules to serve as a director for a particular facility.

In order to make a determination of director certification, CO reviews official transcript(s) and work experience and requests additional information, if necessary. CO signs the original Facility Director Certification Request form in blue ink and returns it to the director

candidate's home address. The certification form is the property of the director candidate and can be submitted to any licensed child care facility across the state of Missouri for consideration in meeting director approval.

In order to make a determination of director approval, the CCFS must receive from either the director candidate or the owner of the facility the original Facility Director Certification Request determination form signed in blue ink (the owner or CCFS may make a copy of this form so that the director candidate always retains the original) along with other supporting documents. The CCFS reviews this information (requests additional information, if necessary) and returns the signed Facility Director Approval Request form to the owner/designee noting approval (or not) for the specific child care facility.

Your Child Care Facility Specialist is an excellent resource to assist you with the director approval process.

This publication provides topical information regarding young children who are cared for in child care settings. We encourage child care providers to make this publication available to parents of children in care or to provide them with the web address (www.dhss.mo.gov/ChildCare/HealthyChildCare) so they can print their own copy.

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Consumer Product Safety Commission Recall

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is an independent federal regulatory agency that works to reduce the risk of injuries and deaths from consumer products. You can reach the CPSC through:

- The CPSC toll-free Hotline at (800) 638-2772 or (800) 638-8270 for the hearing and speech impaired.
- The CPSC web site at <http://www.cpsc.gov>.

How to Obtain Recall Information

The U.S. CPSC issues approximately 300 product recalls each



year, including many products found in child care settings.

Because many consumers do not know about the recalls, potentially unsafe products may be loaned or given to a charity, relatives, or neighbors, or sold at garage sales or second hand stores. If you wish to buy, sell,

or lend used products, you can contact the CPSC to find out whether these products have been recalled, and, if so, what you should do with them.

To receive CPSC's current recall information automatically by email or fax or in a quarterly compilation of recalls sent by regular mail, call CPSC's Hotline and after the greeting, enter 140, then follow the instructions given.

Each issue of this newsletter will highlight a recalled product or a safety issue; however, it would be wise to check with the CPSC on a regular basis for more comprehensive information.

Glowin' Dino and Glowin' Doggy Animal Flashlight Recall

In cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Little Tikes Company announced a voluntary recall of approximately 20,800 Glowin' Dino and Glowin' Doggy animal flashlights manufactured in China.

The paint on the flashlights could contain excess levels of lead, which is toxic if ingested by young children and can cause adverse health effects.

Although no injuries or incidents have been reported, consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed.

These flashlights were sold only at Target between November 2005 and December 2005 for about \$10. They are about 9 inches long. The dinosaur roars and the dog barks when the flashlight is operated. Date codes are located on the bottom of the flashlights and contain the following codes. LC5H161, LC5H291, LC5I031, LC5I091, LC5I131, LC5J061, LC5J231, and LC5J311. Units that do not contain these codes or other animal flashlight characters made by the Little Tikes Co. are not included in this recall. Also, units that have an "R" at the end of the date code are not included in the recall.

Consumers should immediately remove the recalled flashlights and contact Little Tikes toll-free at (866) 765-6729 anytime, or visit the company's Web site at <http://www.littletikes.com/consumerservice/recalls.aspx> for more information. Consumers will receive a free replacement flashlight or refund.

Ever wonder where the phrase

"Mad as a Hatter"

came from?

In the 1880's, felt hats were very popular. Hat makers ("hatters") used mercury solutions to remove fur from animal pelts to make the felt. Hatters working in poorly ventilated workshops would breathe in mercury compounds and the metal would accumulate in their bodies.

When doctors examined the hatters, they found "holes the size of quarters" inside the hatters' brains.

A cumulative poison, mercury causes kidney and brain damage. Years of exposure can cause physical symptoms including:

- ▶ Trembling (known at the time as *hatter's shakes*).
- ▶ Loosening of teeth.
- ▶ Loss of coordination.
- ▶ Slurred speech.

Mental symptoms can include:

- ▶ Irritability.
- ▶ Loss of memory.
- ▶ Depression.
- ▶ Anxiety.
- ▶ Personality changes. This was called *mad hatter syndrome*.

Mercury is found in items such as thermometers, switches, thermostats, light-up shoes, jewelry, some batteries, and fluorescent light bulbs. When mercury-containing items are broken, mercury can spill out. Improper clean up with a vacuum, paintbrush or household cleaner increases exposure by dispersing the mercury throughout the room.

Short-term exposure to high levels of mercury vapors may cause lung damage, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, increases in blood pressure or heart rate, skin rashes, and eye irritation.

When buying new equipment, choose products that have lower mercury or are mercury-free (ex.

mercury free oral thermometer or a digital ear thermometer). To recycle an unwanted mercury-containing item, contact the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Environmental Services at (573) 634-2436.

Dangers of Mercury

Mercury passes from a mother's body:

- ▶ To the fetus.
- ▶ To a nursing infant.

Mercury can accumulate in the fetus leading to:

- ▶ Brain damage.
- ▶ Mental retardation.
- ▶ Clumsiness.
- ▶ Blindness.
- ▶ Seizures.
- ▶ Inability to speak.

Children under 12 years of age who have been poisoned by mercury may:

- ▶ Suffer kidney damage.
- or
- ▶ Develop problems with their nervous and digestive systems.

Submitted by:
Kristi Campbell
Bureau of Environmental Epidemiology
(573) 751-6102

Junior Trail Mix

Ingredients	10 servings	25 servings	Directions
Plain Cheerios	2 cups	4 cups	Mix all ingredients together and store in an airtight container.
Kix Cereal	2 cups	4 cups	
Chopped raisins, seedless	1 cup	2 cups (packed)	
Peanut butter morsels	1/2 cup	1 cup	

Recipe source:
Young Parents Educ. Center
Great Falls, NE

Portion size for 3 - 5 year old: 1/2 cup Provides 1/2 bread alternate.

Insect Repellent Safety

With the added threat of West Nile virus (WNV) and tick-borne disease, the once annoying problem of mosquitoes and ticks is now a serious health threat.

What works best?

DEET is the only EPA-registered active ingredient labeled for both mosquitoes and ticks. It is approved for use on *children over the age of two months*. However, if you are only concerned about mosquitoes, consider a product with picaridin as the active ingredient.

Repellents containing DEET protect against WNV, ehrlichiosis, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, and tick-borne disease. These diseases can cause serious health impacts or death if not treated in a timely manner.

Should I be concerned about the safety of these products?

Products labeled by EPA have been determined safe and effective. Consumers must read labels to learn whether the EPA has labeled the product, what insects the product repels, and how long the product is effective.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, DEET-based repellents:

- ▶ Should first be applied to an adult's hands and then to a child's exposed skin areas and/or clothing.
- ▶ May be used along with a separate sunscreen if applied according to label instructions.
- ▶ Should be chosen based on the length of time you will be outdoors (a higher percentage of active ingredient for longer time periods).
- ▶ Should not be used on children's hands or on cuts and irritated skin.
- ▶ Should not be sprayed in an enclosed area or near food.
- ▶ Should be washed off with soap and water when returning indoors.

Information provided by:
Nadine Abernathy, LCSW
Parentlink, a program of the
University of MO Extension
1-800-552-8522
Karen Yates, M.S. & Alyce Turner
Section for Disease Control
& Environmental Epidemiology
1-866-628-9891

Want More Information?

For more information, contact your state or local health department or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at <http://www.cdc.gov> or call their number at 970-221-6400.

Lawn Mower Safety Tips

Each year over 300,000 individuals are injured in lawn mower related accidents according to the US Consumer Product Safety Commission. Many of these accidents could be prevented by:

- ▶ Keeping children and pets indoors or at a safe distance.
- ▶ Mowing across the slope when using a push mower.
- ▶ Mowing up and down a slope when using a riding mower.
- ▶ Never allowing children to ride as passengers on a riding mower.
- ▶ Looking before backing up when on a riding mower.
- ▶ Clearing objects that could be thrown by the mower.
- ▶ Stopping the engine before clearing grass clippings.
- ▶ Using an implement to clean the discharge chute.
- ▶ Keeping in place protective guards/shields, etc.
- ▶ Wearing safety goggles, hearing protection, etc.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children be at least:

- ▶ 12 years old to operate a walk-behind power mower or hand mower.
- ▶ 16 years old to operate a riding mower.



Sources:
American Academy of Pediatrics
Univ. of Michigan Health System
The Indiana Hand Center

Reduce Van Rollovers

Is your van at risk of a rollover? If you have a 15 passenger van (14 passengers plus the driver), the US Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) advises that this risk is increased if:

- 🚗 More than 10 passengers are on board since the increased weight raises the vehicle's center of gravity and causes it to shift to the rear.
- 🚗 The van goes off a rural road since it could roll if it hits a ditch or soft soil.
- 🚗 The driver is overly tired or drives too fast for the road conditions.
- 🚗 The driver overcorrects the steering (ex. after a tire drops off the pavement) especially at high rates of speed.
- 🚗 Seat belts are either not used or are used incorrectly.

As safety precautions, the NHTSA recommends:

- 🚗 Establishing and enforcing a written seat belt policy.
- 🚗 Having 1 or 2 persons consistently drive the van to gain proficiency.
- 🚗 Never driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs or when overly tired.
- 🚗 Driving cautiously.
- 🚗 Gradually reducing speed if your tire goes off the road; then slowly returning to the road when safe to do so.
- 🚗 Maintaining the van's tires.
- 🚗 Having passengers sit in front of the rear axle if less than 15 people are on board.
- 🚗 Never transporting more than 15 people in a 15-passenger van.
- 🚗 Allowing more space around the vehicle when driving.
- 🚗 Using the side-view mirrors when changing lanes.
- 🚗 Allowing sufficient braking time.

The NHTSA website has additional information about passenger safety. This website also has free games for children which can be downloaded at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/childps/PlayItSafeWeb/pages/index.htm>.

Sources:
National Hwy Traffic Safety Admin.
MO Hwy Patrol

Seat Belt Facts

- 🚗 An unbelted occupant of a 30 mph car crash hits the windshield or other interior surfaces with the same impact as a fall from a three-story building.
- 🚗 People without seat belts have been killed at speeds as low as 12 mph.
- 🚗 The effectiveness of an air bag system drops 40 percent when a seat belt is not used.

Missouri Law

- 🚗 Children ages 4 through 15 must use seat belts.
- 🚗 The driver is responsible for assuring that all passengers under age 16 years are safely buckled.

Exception: Vehicles designed to carry more than 10 people.

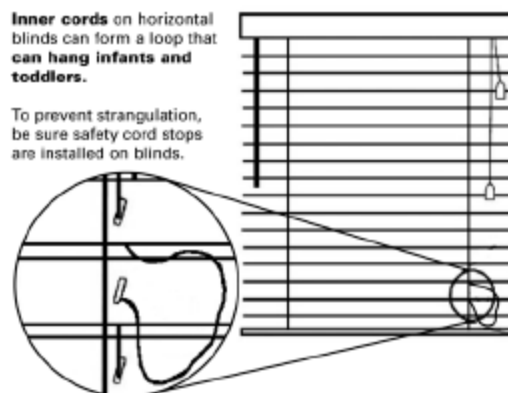
This information was taken from the Missouri State Highway Patrol publication Join Our Click! To view the entire brochure, visit <http://www.mshp.dps.missouri.gov/mshpweb/publications/brochures/shp-740.pdf>. Additional information on Missouri laws regarding seat belts and safety is available on the Missouri State Highway Patrol website.

For CACFP training dates, please visit <http://www.dhss.mo.gov/cacfp/training.html>.

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A free retrofit kit is available from windowcoverings.org. Although these kits do not prevent all strangulations, they do reduce the risk of strangulation. Installation of the small plastic attachments (cord stops) to reduce the risk of inner cords from being pulled loose can be done in minutes without removing the blinds.

By taking a few minutes to review and comply with these safety guidelines, you can protect the life of a child you love.

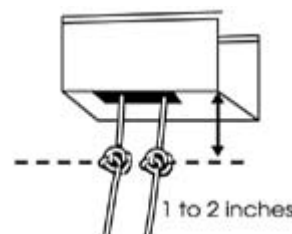
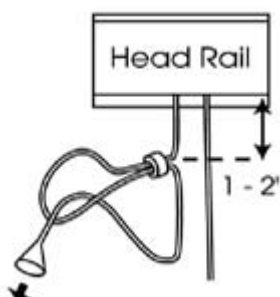
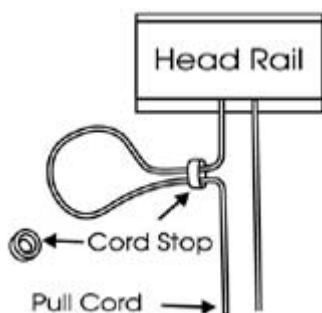


For Free Fix-It Kit call Window Covering Safety Council:

1-800-506-4636

Installation of Cord Stops

Illustration from CPSC



Illustrations regarding cord stops courtesy of the Window Covering Safety Council.

Sources (and further information regarding window cord safety):
U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission www.cpsc.org
Parents for Window Blind Safety www.pfwbs.org
Window Covering Safety Council www.windowcoverings.org

Avian Flu

In response to concerns about the avian flu, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has prepared a plan to handle an influenza pandemic (global disease outbreak). Detailed information can be found at:

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/>.

This site provides information about a pandemic and avian flu pandemic in particular.

<http://www.dhss.mo.gov/PandemicInfluenza/PandemicPlan.pdf>.
This site provides Missouri's planning and response.

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/preschool.html>.

This site provides information on developing a child care and preschool planning checklist.

Dangerous outlet protectors

Outlet covers, designed to protect children from accidental electrical shock, may harm children if not designed or installed correctly. Before installing these, make sure that the device:

- ▶ Does not pose a choking hazard (it should not fit through a choke tube).
- ▶ Closes completely if it is intended to cover the entire outlet.

Some agencies test these and other products. You can check the Internet or your local library for further information. Be safe for children's sake.



Leaves of 3, let them be

Is your knowledge of poisonous plants limited to poison ivy? Do you know whether the plants in your house and yard are poisonous? If not, you may want to visit the Cornell University website on poisonous plants. This resource provides an alphabetical listing of plants with color pictures and frequently asked questions about the same. For more information, visit <http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/plants/index.html>

Newsletter by E-mail

If you would like to receive the Healthy Child Care newsletter electronically, please send an email to MaryAnn.Simmons@dhss.mo.gov and put "Healthy Child Care newsletter" in the subject line. Be sure to include your current mailing address as well.

Advantages:

- ▶ Information not delayed due to printing and mailing.
- ▶ Immediate link to web sites.
- ▶ Less paper waste.

Alternate forms of this publication for persons with disabilities may be obtained by contacting the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Bureau of Child Care, P.O. Box 570, Jefferson City, MO, 65102, 573-751-2450. Hearing impaired citizens telephone 800-735-2966 or VOICE 1-800-735-2466. EEO/AAP services provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.



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